

# NOTES ON THE ATIK MUSTAFA PAŞA CAMII IN ISTANBUL AND ITS FRESCOES

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To an earlier generation of architectural historians the principal interest of the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii lay in its place in a presumed evolutionary development of Byzantine architecture that advanced from a simple cross-domed type into the “standard” four-column or cross-in-square type edifice. A. Van Millingen described the evolution in the following terms: “From a church of this type to the later four-columned plan is but a step. The dome piers of Sts. Peter and Mark (his name for the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii) are still L-shaped, and form the internal angles of the cross. As the arches between such piers and the external walls increased in size, the piers became smaller, until eventually they were reduced to the typical four columns of the late churches.”<sup>1</sup> In keeping with this theory, Van Millingen grouped the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii with two other, somewhat more elaborate versions of the cross-domed plan, namely, the Kalenderhane Camii and the Gül Camii, and he dated the three of them to the tenth century.<sup>2</sup> J. Ebersolt, publishing a year later, made the same grouping as Van Millingen, both reflecting the conceptual framework already found in C. Diehl who thought he recognized in these three monuments “un édifice de transition.”<sup>3</sup>

The missing links in this chain of evolution, however, were never found, and architectural historians have come to accept the existence side by side of a number of different building types in Byzantine architecture; the different types develop in parallel rather than consecutively.<sup>4</sup> In Constan-

tinople, moreover, the two monuments associated with the Atik have been shown to belong not to a transition period in the formative years of Middle Byzantine architecture but to a period considerably later. The recessed brick technique used in the substructures of the Gül Camii indicates a date in the eleventh or twelfth century;<sup>5</sup> coin and pottery finds in undisturbed fill beneath the Kalenderhane Camii give a date in the last two decades of the twelfth century.<sup>6</sup> This seems to leave the Atik alone as the earliest Constantinopolitan example of a cross-domed church (and indeed the first Constantinopolitan church after Iconoclasm). If such a date could be sustained, the building would have considerable importance for the discussion of the development and diffusion of this building type, for, as R. Krautheimer pointed out, it was this building type, with its heavy crossing piers and simple, barrel-vaulted corner bays, that became “canonical” all across Russia in the course of the eleventh century.<sup>7</sup> But if the earlier evolutionary argument for the date of the monument is put aside, the place of the building in Byzantine architecture becomes an open issue. In fact, W. Müller-Wiener has recently assigned it a date in the eleventh or twelfth century.<sup>8</sup>

Although some attention has been given to the problem of the historical identification of the building—a problem to which we will return at the

<sup>1</sup> A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches in Constantinople* (London, 1912), 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 164–95 and 332–35.

<sup>3</sup> J. Ebersolt and A. Thiers, *Les églises de Constantinople* (Paris, 1913), 93–136; C. Diehl, *Manuel d'art byzantin* (Paris, 1910), 408.

<sup>4</sup> R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, 1975), 355–62.

<sup>5</sup> H. Schäfer, *Die Gül Camii in Istanbul. Ein Beitrag zur mittelbyzantinischen Kirchenarchitektur Konstantinopels*. IstMitt, Beiheft 7 (1973), 77–81. Schäfer prefers a date in the mid-twelfth century, but the evidence does not permit that precision. See review by Mathews in *Architectura*, 5 (1975), 191.

<sup>6</sup> C. L. Striker and Y. D. Kuban, “Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul: Fourth Preliminary Report,” *DOP*, 25 (1971), 258.

<sup>7</sup> Krautheimer, *Early Christian*, 309–10.

<sup>8</sup> W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 82.

close of these notes—virtually nothing has been said about the physical evidence of the building itself. This is due in part to the present state of the monument. The Turkish use of the building dating from before 1512 has entailed several radical modifications: the cupola has been replaced with a low, windowless dome; the narthex, with a porch and minaret; interior decoration and furnishings have been removed; and the fenestration has been thoroughly revised. Most recently a new cement footing has been poured around the exterior walls, and the mosque property has been surrounded with a high stone wall. The special sanctity of the mosque as the revered resting place of the seventh-century warrior of Islam, Hazreti Cabir, has precluded archaeological investigation of the site. Nevertheless, the building in its present state still offers some significant evidence bearing on its date as well as evidence for its original shape. This evidence consists in the visible shapes and forms of the architecture and in the record of its successive building phases now exposed in the exterior masonry. Comprehensive photography of the monument now permits close analysis of this evidence.<sup>9</sup> In addition, an early measured plan and elevation, made before 1920 for the Eski Eserleri Koruma Encumeni (Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments) adds new precision to the measurements available in published plans and elevations.<sup>10</sup> Working from these photographs and from these earlier drawings it has been possible to draft reconstructions of the original appearance of the east and south façades. While not guaranteed to the centimeter, these reconstructions can be proven correct in all major features. Beyond the architectural interest of the monument, frescoes were uncovered in 1956 in the arcade of the south exterior wall which have remained until now unpublished. These are of interest to the history of Paleologan painting in the capital, and they have recently been cited as evidence for the original dedication of the church.<sup>11</sup> It therefore seemed to us useful to present together these various kinds of evidence bearing on the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii.

<sup>9</sup>I am indebted to İhsan Erzi, director of the Vakıflar Ministry of Mosques, who graciously granted permission for photography. T.F.M.

<sup>10</sup>These drawings were brought to my attention by Nezih Firatlı, late director of the Istanbul Archeological Museum. For permission to publish these drawings I am indebted to Bekir Sukru Egeli, secretary of the Eski Eserleri Koruma Encumeni. T.F.M.

<sup>11</sup>B. Aran, "The Nunnery of the Anargyres and the Atik Mustafa Pasha Mosque," *JÖB*, 26 (1977), 252.

### 1. *The Articulation of the East End and the Dating of the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii*

Three apses project on the east end, each of which has three facets (fig. 5). The double sawtooth moulding at the top, which regularizes the roofline all around the building, is Turkish; it was visible a hundred years ago when Paspates made his lithograph.<sup>12</sup> Some windows have been walled up in Turkish times, others have been reshaped, and still others opened up where there had been none. Further, some passages of masonry have been repaired and some plastered over in Turkish times. In spite of these alterations, however, an analysis of the masonry reveals the original articulation (figs. 6–7).<sup>13</sup>

In the center apse the insertion of the mihrab on the interior required closing up the center window (figs. 2, 13), at which time a new rectangular window was cut above the closed window. Two important details can be noticed in the design of the original filled window. First, the window was recessed, for the brick reveal is visible along the left side with a corresponding indentation in the covering cement on the right. T. Traquair, Van Millingen's architect collaborator, observed this in his plan of the building,<sup>14</sup> and this is perfectly in keeping with the recessed treatment of the openings on the south side, where some have retained their original shape (figs. 8, 10). The fact that the four remaining round-headed windows on the east no longer have their set-backs is due to filling in over the reveals when new window frames were installed. The second important detail to be observed is the full height of the center window. Following down the right and left edges of this window, one does not encounter continuous courses of masonry until one gets to a level just below the sills of the Turkish windows in the right and left side facets of the apse. The original three windows of the center apse were of matching height; the rectangular Turkish window frames in the right and left windows were simply set on the sills of the original windows. The height of these windows is important for gaining some notion of the original proportions of the building. Since the sills of the Turkish windows are only .50 m from the floor on the interior (figs. 4, 13), it is clear that the present floor

<sup>12</sup>A. G. Paspates, Βυζαντιναὶ μελέται τοπογραφικαὶ καὶ ιστορικαὶ (Constantinople, 1877), 320.

<sup>13</sup>The analysis of masonry in fig. 2 is based on the photograph in fig. 1 as well as on a number of other photographs, in black and white and in color, plus notes made on the site.

<sup>14</sup>Van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches*, 195, fig. 64.

level, as well as the surrounding ground level, is considerably higher than it was originally. One cannot possibly imagine the three great windows of the apse rising from the floor; at a minimum one has to suppose room for seating the clergy beneath them, which would require the floor to be situated about 1.50 m below its present level.<sup>15</sup> Therefore the "heavy" proportions of the building, remarked by Ebersolt, are not the original proportions.<sup>16</sup> The change in ground and floor level is clearly due to the location of the building. The Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii is approximately 5 m above present sea level (which has dropped a meter or two since medieval times) and less than 20 m from the Sea Wall along the Golden Horn.<sup>17</sup> This site is at the bottom of the steep incline of the Blachernes where it would naturally tend to silt up with the passage of time. The restoration of 1.5 m to its height returns the church to its original Byzantine lines (fig. 7).

Above the three tall windows of the center apse one can trace three smaller openings in the original masonry: those to the right and left are unmistakable, while that in the center can be inferred from the pitched bricks of the springings of the arch at either side of the present Turkish window. That these three openings were windows and not decorative niches can be argued from their generous size (*ca.* 1.30 × .70 m) and from their placement. The apex of these windows, allowing for the usual reveals, lies at a point just below the middle of the present Turkish window here, which in the interior would correspond to a point about .20 m below the springing of the apse vault (fig. 13). Had these been intended as decorative niches the architect could have disregarded the height inside and let his niches match those on the north and south apses.

The north and south apses match one another but contrast in design with the center apse. Each of the side apses had three windows at an intermediate level in respect to those in the center apse. The dimensions of these windows seem to have matched the dimensions of the single window retained in each apse; this can be inferred from the contrast between the irregular fill and the continuous courses of masonry below the windowsill level. Above and below the window one can see the arches

<sup>15</sup> The corresponding dimension at the Lips church is 2 m. Cf. the section by E. Mamboury in T. Macridy, "The Monastery of Lips (Fenari Isa Camii) at Istanbul," *DOP*, 18 (1964), fig. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Ebersolt, *Les églises*, 134.

<sup>17</sup> Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 83, fig. 64, and 302, fig. 344.

of smaller openings. The openings above must be interpreted as decorative niches since at this height windows would have intersected the springing of the apse vaults inside (the relation between the existing window and the vault can be seen in fig. 16). The openings below should probably also be interpreted as decorative niches since they match in size the niches above.

Insofar as it can be read beneath the later alterations and repairs, the masonry of the east end of the Atik shows a sequence of bands of brick and stone. Due to the contrast in design between the center and side apses the bands do not always continue from apse to apse. Unfortunately, in Constantinople alternating bands of brick and stone can be found in every period from the fifth to the fourteenth century. The design of the apses, however, gives us a more reliable index of date, for apse design undergoes a fairly regular evolution in Constantinople and examples are numerous, since, whatever its plan, a church had to have an apse. The sequence can be followed century by century from the powerful designs of the single, three-windowed apses of the Chalkoprateia and Studios basilicas in the fifth century to the colorful and delicate sculptural apses of the Paleologan period at the Pammakaristos and Chora.<sup>18</sup> Within this long evolution the design of the apses of the Atik stands closest to that of the Theotokos of Lips of 907 and the Myrelaion of 920–22.<sup>19</sup> With these churches the Atik shares the basic plan of three triple-faceted apses in which surfaces begin to be broken up by windows and niches set at varying levels. At the same time the solidity and integrity of the wall surface is still respected. In its later evolution the facets of the apse are multiplied and every available surface is hollowed out with tier upon tier of niches, as at the Pantokrator or the Gǖl Camii.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, certain features of the Atik design belong to an earlier phase in the evolution. In the first place, at the Lips and the Myrelaion, and consistently in all later churches in Constantinople, the three windows of the apse are grouped together as a triple window with only mullions between them. By contrast, the three great windows in the center apse of the Atik are separately cut out of the facets of the apse and have piers of brick between them,

<sup>18</sup> T. Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul, A Photographic Survey* (University Park, Pa., 1976), *passim*.

<sup>19</sup> C. L. Striker, *The Myrelaion (Budrum Camii) in Istanbul* (Princeton, 1981), figs. 12 and 37; Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches*, figs. 24.2, 24.4, 35.9–35.11.

<sup>20</sup> Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches*, figs. 10.4–10.6, 10.10, 10.11, 10.31, 10.45, and 13.4, 13.6.

and this design is echoed in the side apses. This separate treatment of the three windows is a feature of early Byzantine architecture in Constantinople, whether one looks at the fifth-century basilicas, the Justinianic churches, or the eighth-century restoration of Hagia Irene.<sup>21</sup> Secondly, the placement of three windows upon three windows in the center apse is also an Early Byzantine feature. The most conspicuous example is Justinian's Hagia Sophia, but occasional sixth-century examples outside of Constantinople can be cited, as well as one ninth-century example, the Fatih Camii in Tırılye.<sup>22</sup> Thirdly, the absence of horizontal cornices which first appear in the Lips and the Myrelaion, and which tend to tie the three apses together, again links the Atik to the simpler designs of the earlier period. Therefore, the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, while closely related to the Lips and the Myrelaion, seems to represent an earlier stage in the evolution of apse design. Very likely it belongs to the second half of the ninth century in the new surge of church building known from literary sources to have followed the defeat of Iconoclasm in 842 and the accession of Basil I in 867.

## *2. The South Side and the Exterior Flanking Porch*

Ebersolt's architect, G. Thiers, observed the south wall of the church early in this century when it was covered with a heavy coat of plaster, on which basis he drafted his elevation (fig. 9). But while the ground plan was meticulously measured (fig. 1), the dimensions of the elevation seem to have been arrived at by rough approximation. Some obvious details that were then visible were omitted and others were introduced without evidence. The measurements provided by the E.E.K.E. section offer guiding lines for reconstructing a new elevation (fig. 4); the falling of exterior plaster since Thiers permits observation of a number of features that escaped him (figs. 8, 10).

The south façade is divided by two buttresses into three unequal bays that diminish from west to east in measurements of 5.51, 4.47, and 3.79 m (Thiers' measurements). To begin with the east bay, Thiers failed to include the rectangular Turkish window on the ground floor, though its position and width

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.7–11.8.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. the churches of Perustica and S. Sophia in Sofia, Bulgaria, and Basilica A in Rusafe, and Qasr-Ibn Wardan in Syria; Krautheimer, *Early Christian*, figs. 86, 215, 112, and 204 respectively. On Tırılye, see C. Mango and I. Ševčenko, "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara," *DOP*, 27 (1973), 235–38.

are indicated in his ground plan. Above this window the full round arch of the original opening is now visible, and from its width and its low position in the wall one can assume it was originally a door. As observed above, the floor level was about a meter and a half below the present floor, hence the proportions of the door would have been perfectly normal. The window that Thiers saw above this he drew too narrow—only two panes wide instead of three; it can be seen that the window matched in width the door below. In framing the new Turkish window the original reveals of the previous window were filled in, and, judging from the seam on the right, the original sill was about .30 m lower. About half a meter below this sill level the peeling of plaster now reveals three brick voussoirs of another arch. This seems to mark a narrower window just above the door which was filled in with irregular masonry in Turkish times.

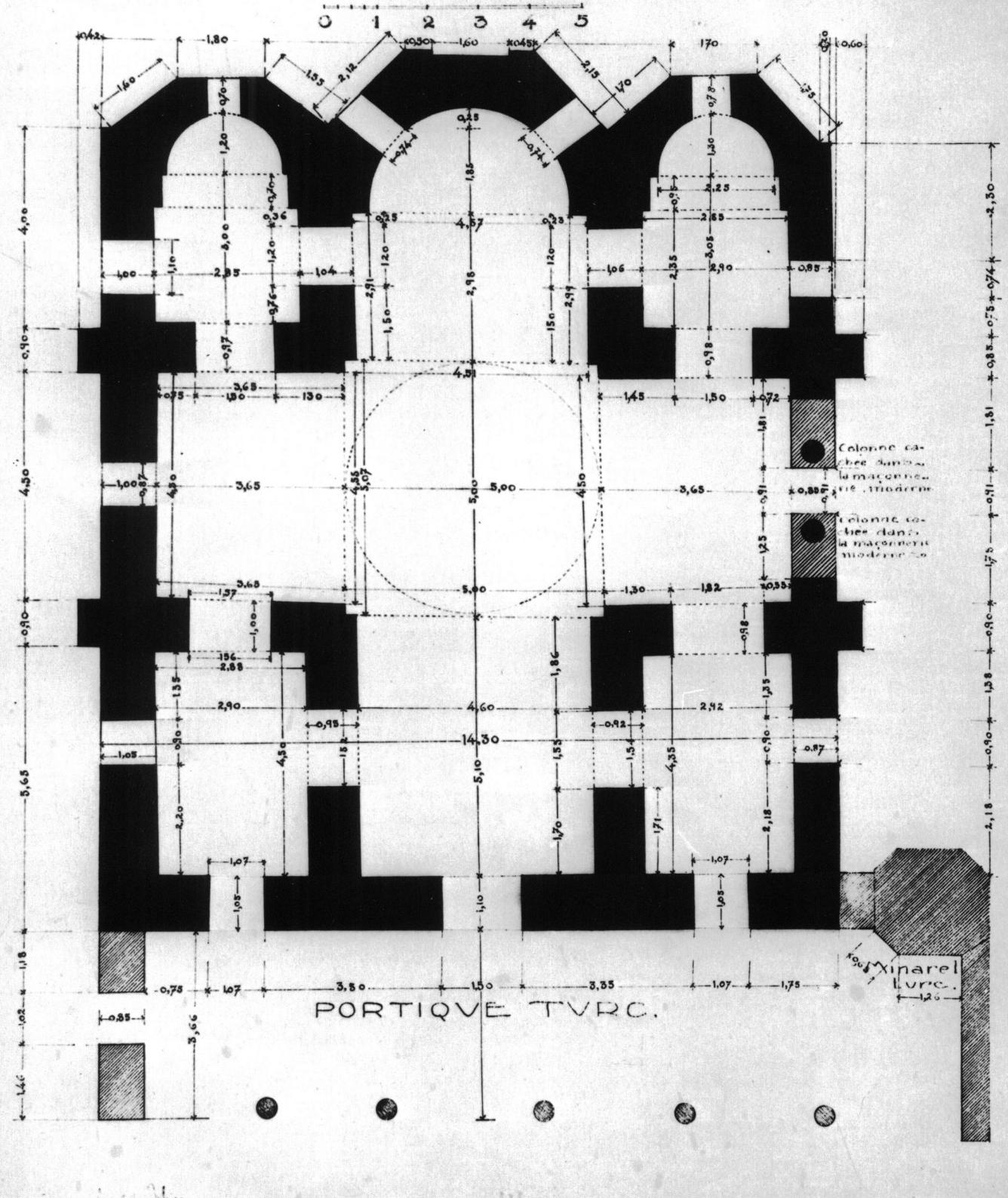
The center bay is more complex, and while Thiers observed the main features he distorted the proportions somewhat. On the ground level, above the rectangular window, the ends of four impost blocks emerge from the surface carrying three arches. From this evidence Thiers (and Traquair as well<sup>23</sup>) inferred the existence of a pair of columns, concealed in the masonry, supporting a triple arcade. It is here that the removal of masonry in 1956 brought the frescoes to light; at the same time the reveals of the arches that frame the frescoes were uncovered (figs. 19–22). Beneath the frescoed lunettes wooden tie-beams span the arches; the arches were probably originally open and the filling is a modification done sometime prior to the painting. The center arch is noticeably larger than the other two.

Above this arcade three more recessed arches appear, still used as windows, their Byzantine brickwork in reasonably good condition. The interior dimensions of these windows and their height from the present floor are given in the E.E.K.E. elevation. Thiers inserted four imposts under the arches, where there is no evidence for them and where structurally they make no sense. Instead, there can be observed at this point a slight projection that runs across the center bay a few centimeters below the windowsills. This corresponds to the cornice on the interior, and we will return to it in a moment.

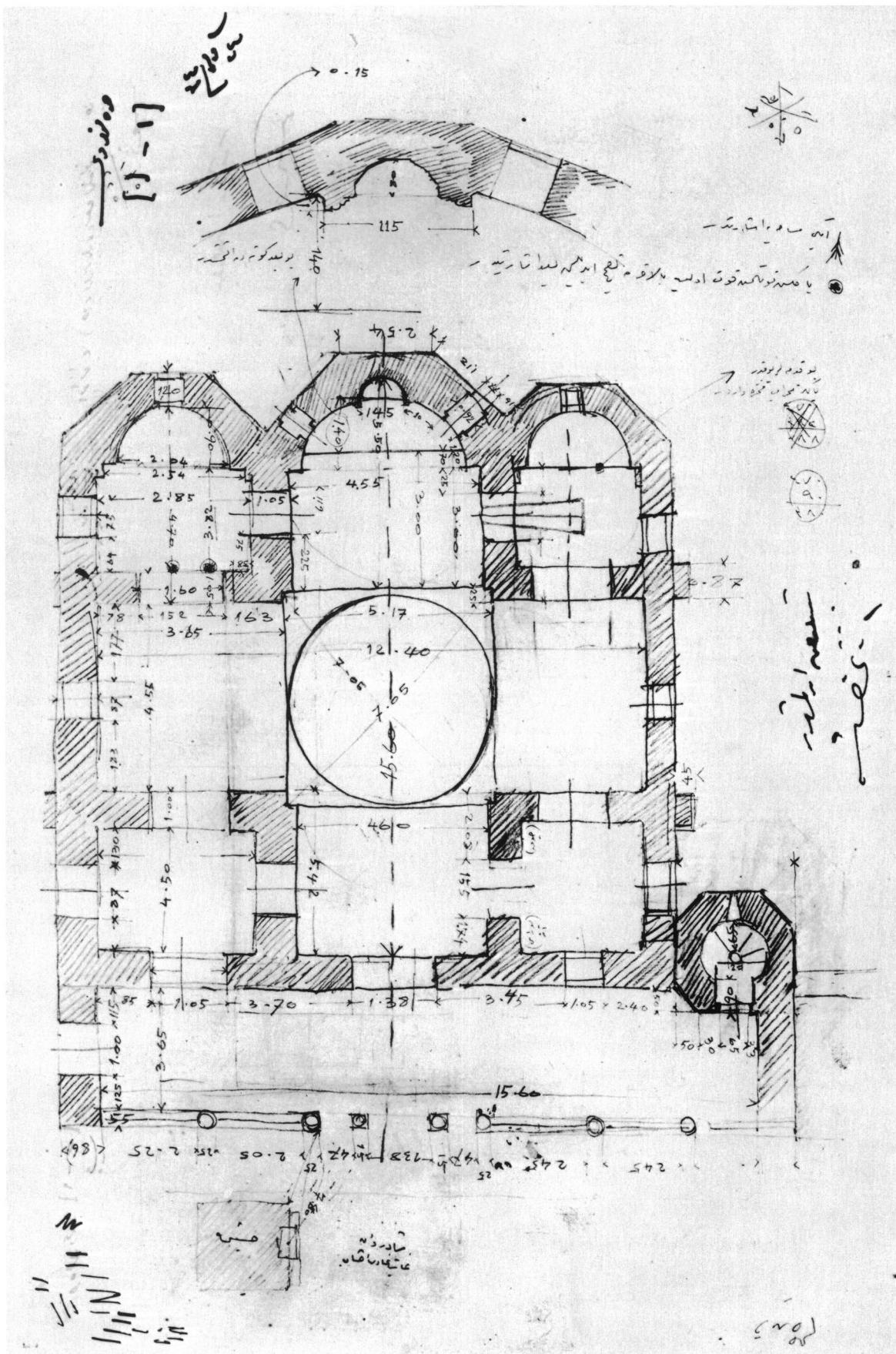
The uppermost zone is spanned by a single arch which is set back slightly from the wall surface be-

<sup>23</sup> Van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches*, 195, fig. 65.

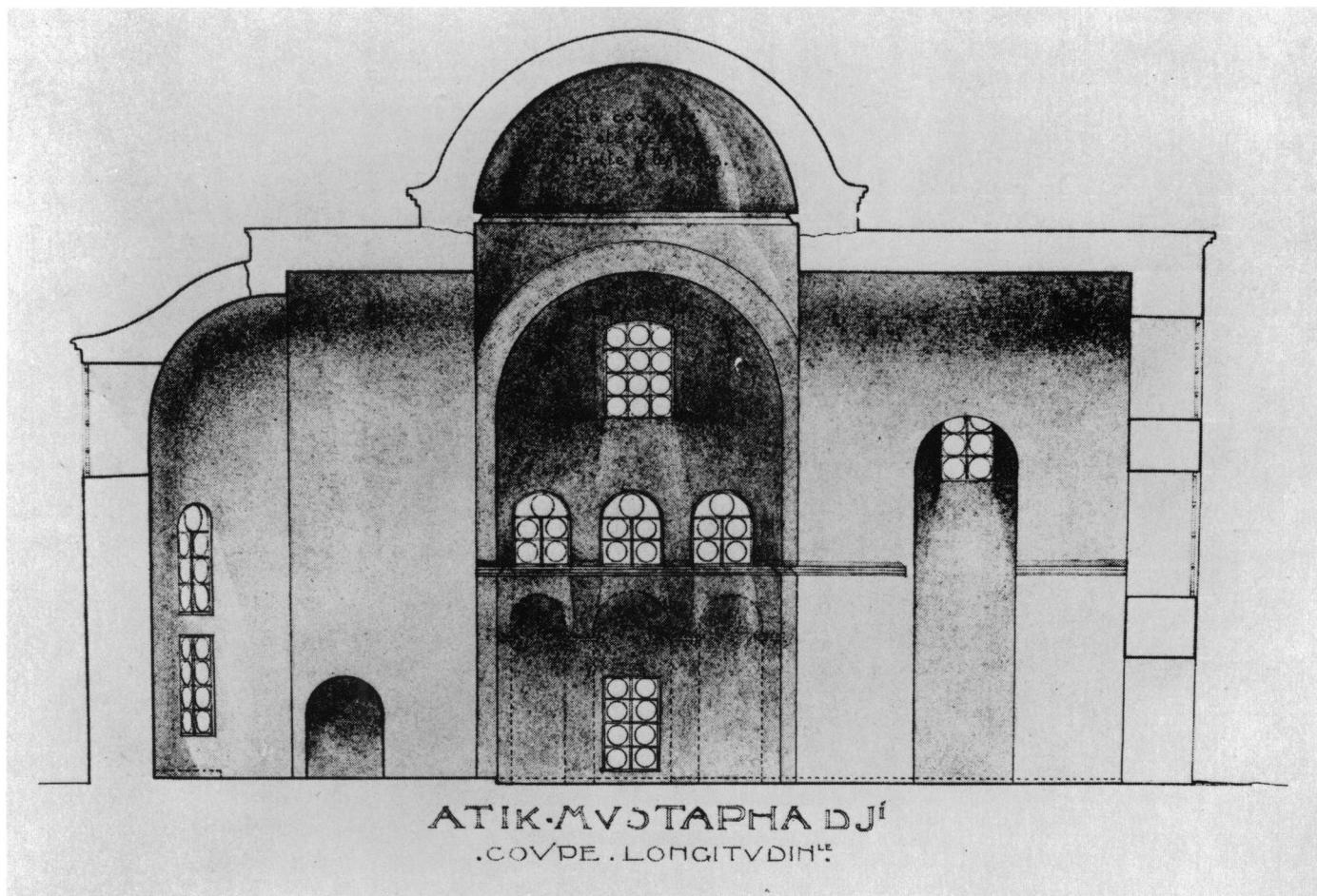
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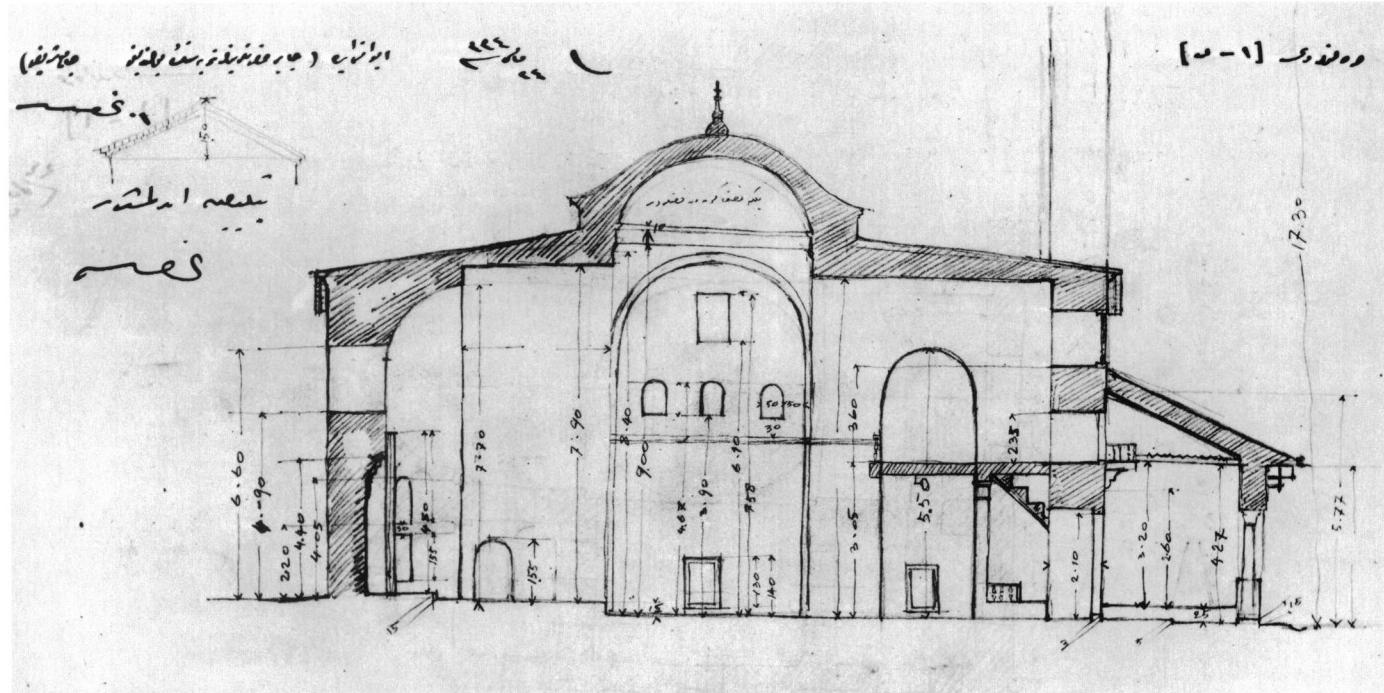
## 1. Istanbul, Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, Plan (after G. Thiers)



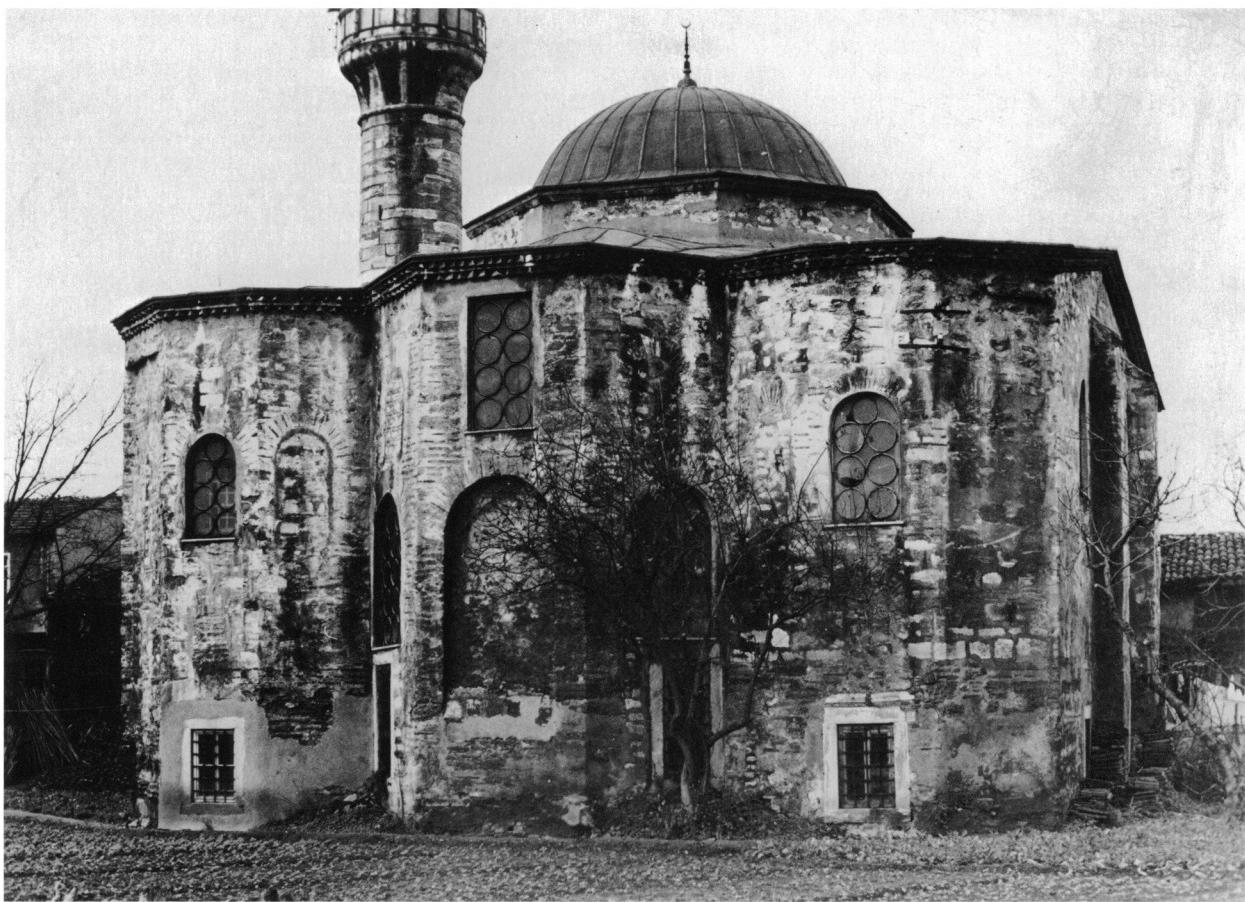
2. Istanbul, Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, Plan, drawn before 1920 for the Eski Eserleri Koruma Encumeni



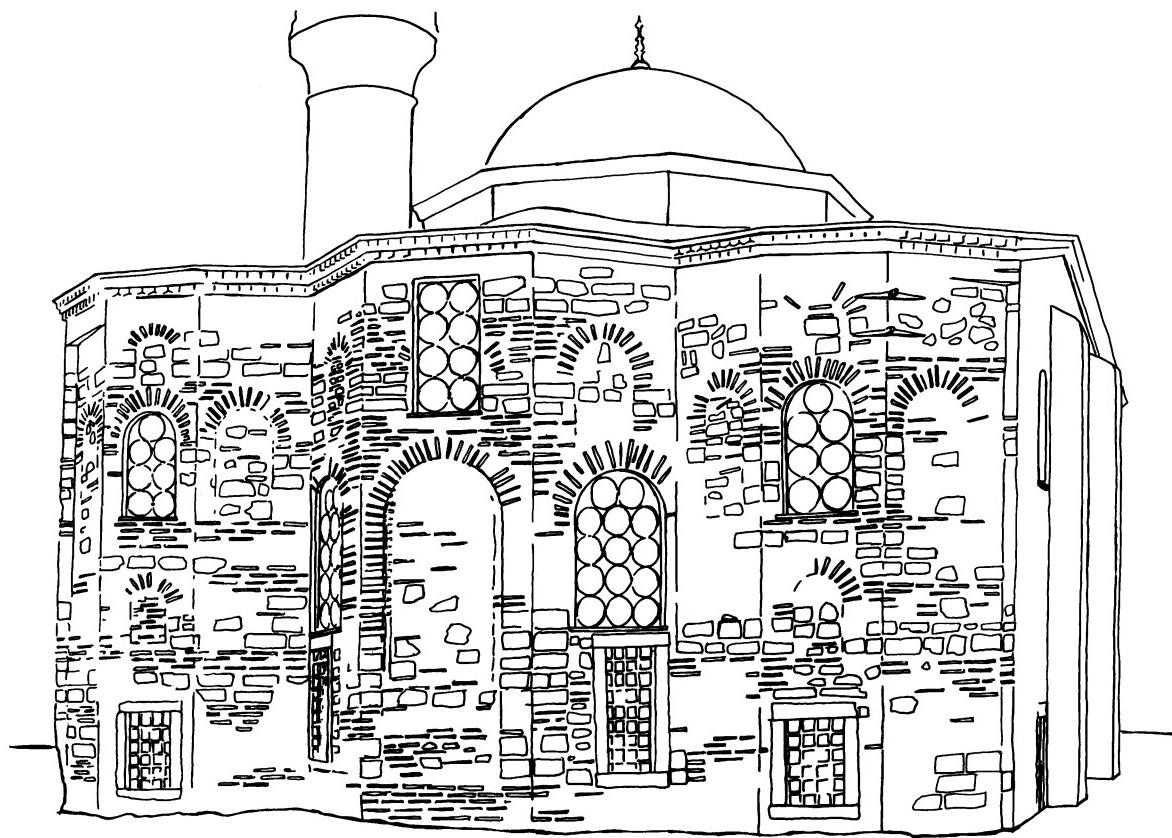
3. Section (after G. Thiers)



4. Section, drawn before 1920 for the Eski Eserleri Koruma Encumeni

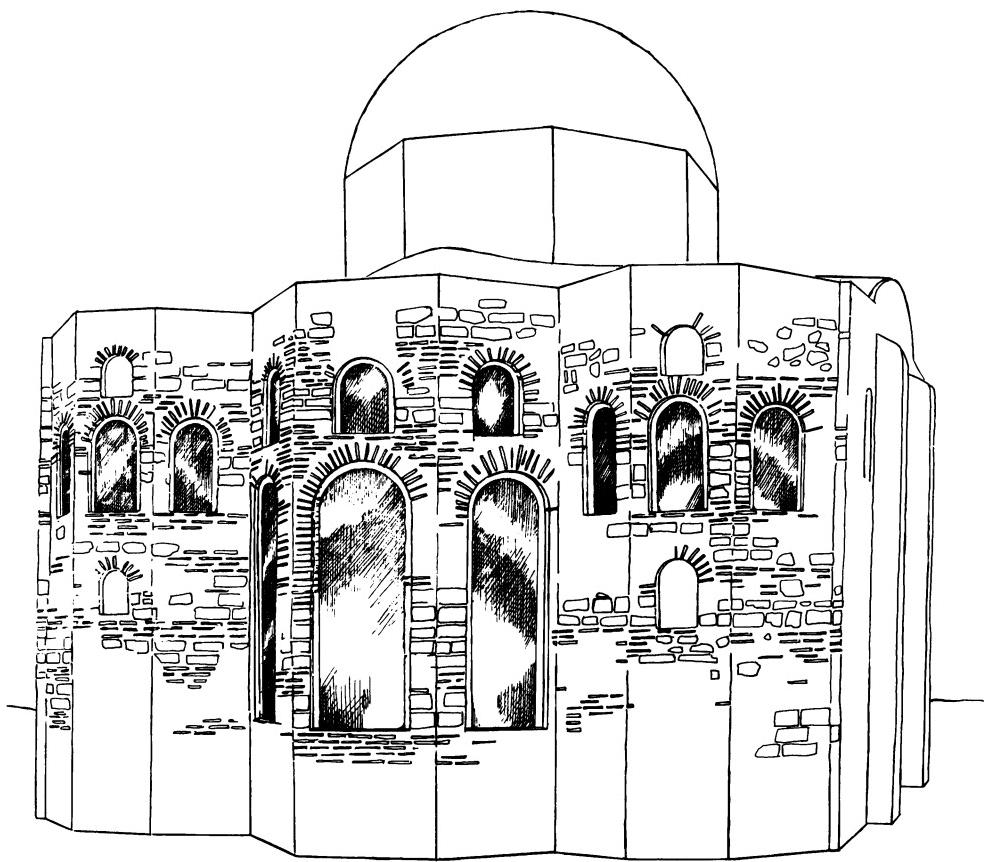


5. In 1970



6. Analysis of Masonry (after Mathews)

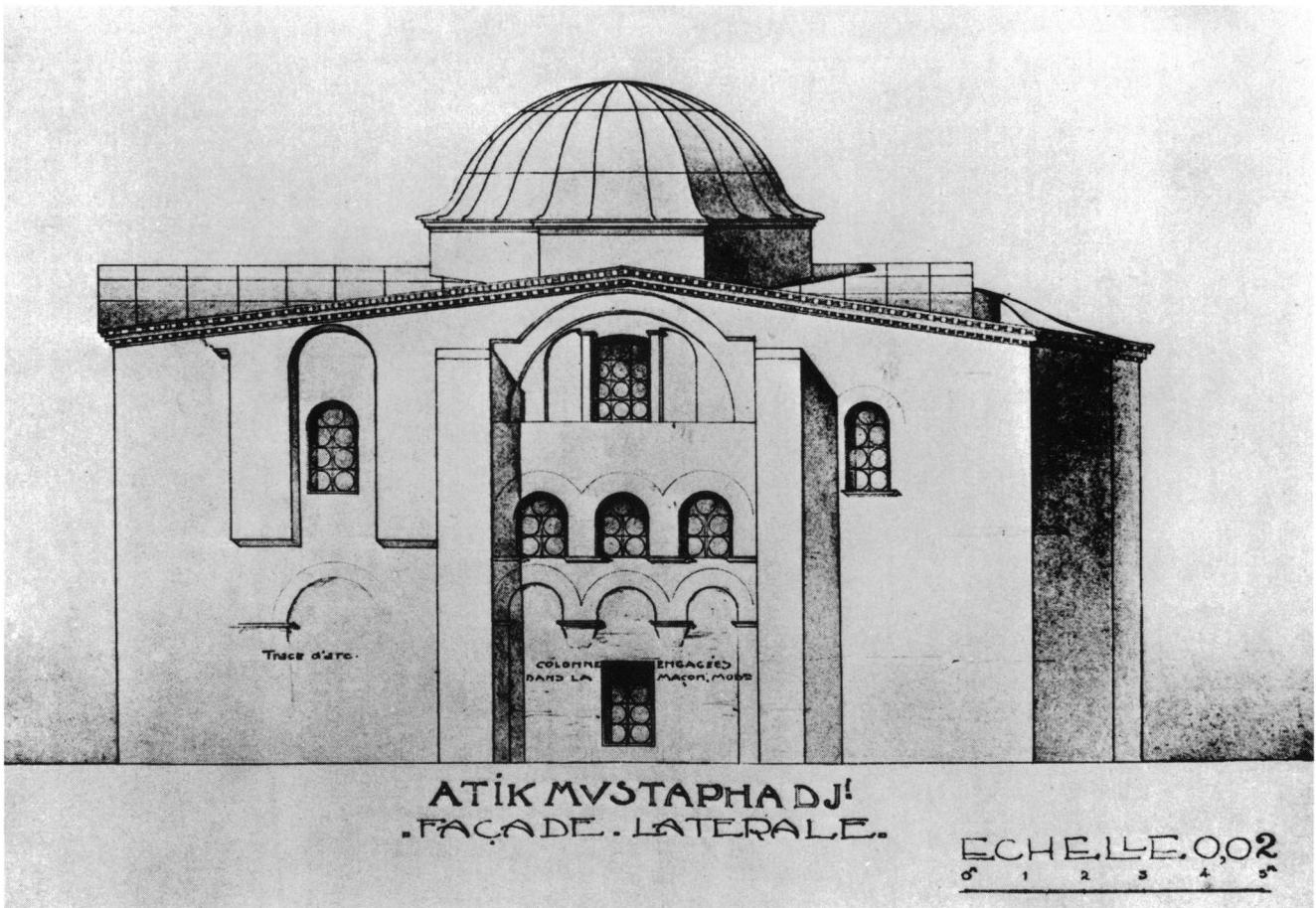
Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, East Façade



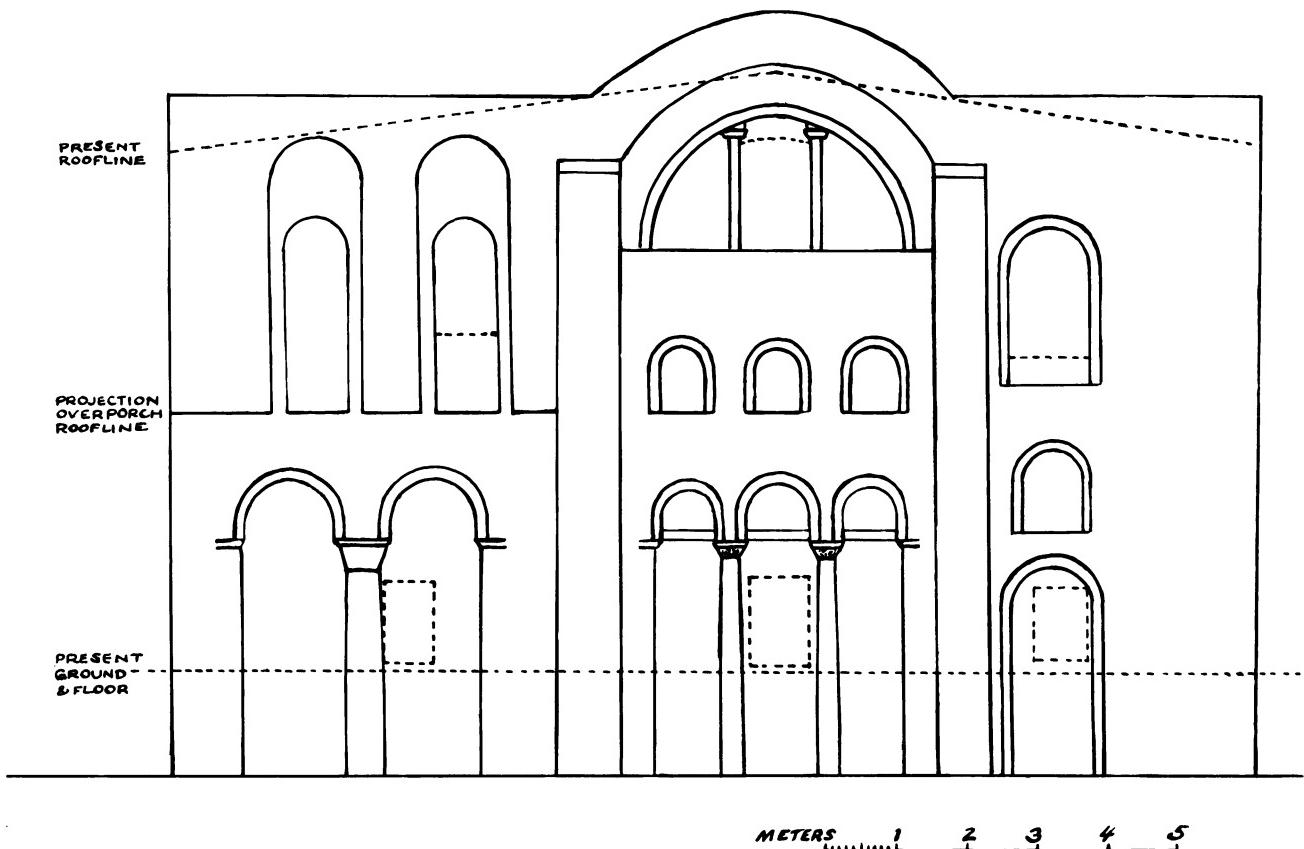
7. East Façade, Reconstruction (after Mathews)



8. South Façade in 1970



9. (after G. Thiers)



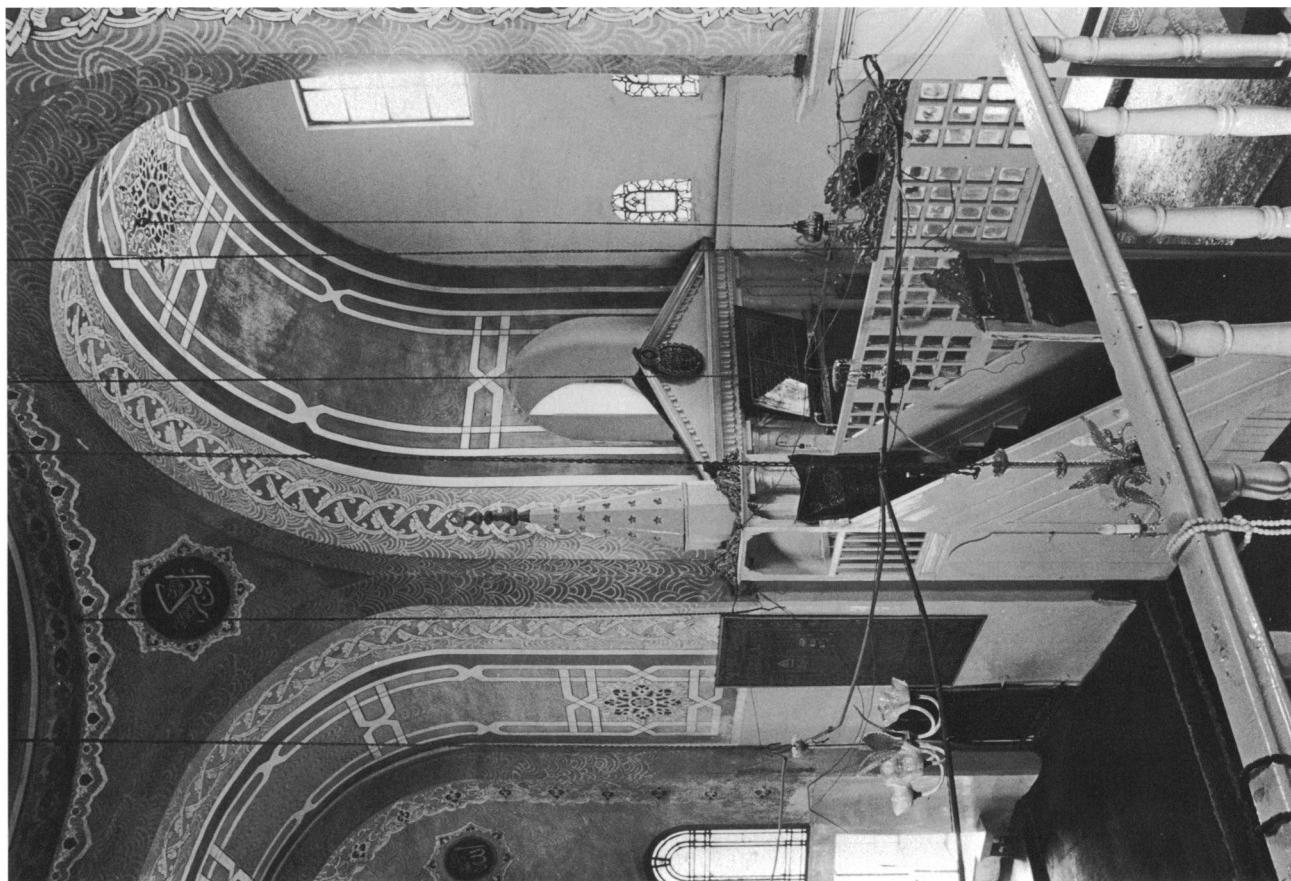
10. Reconstruction (after Mathews)



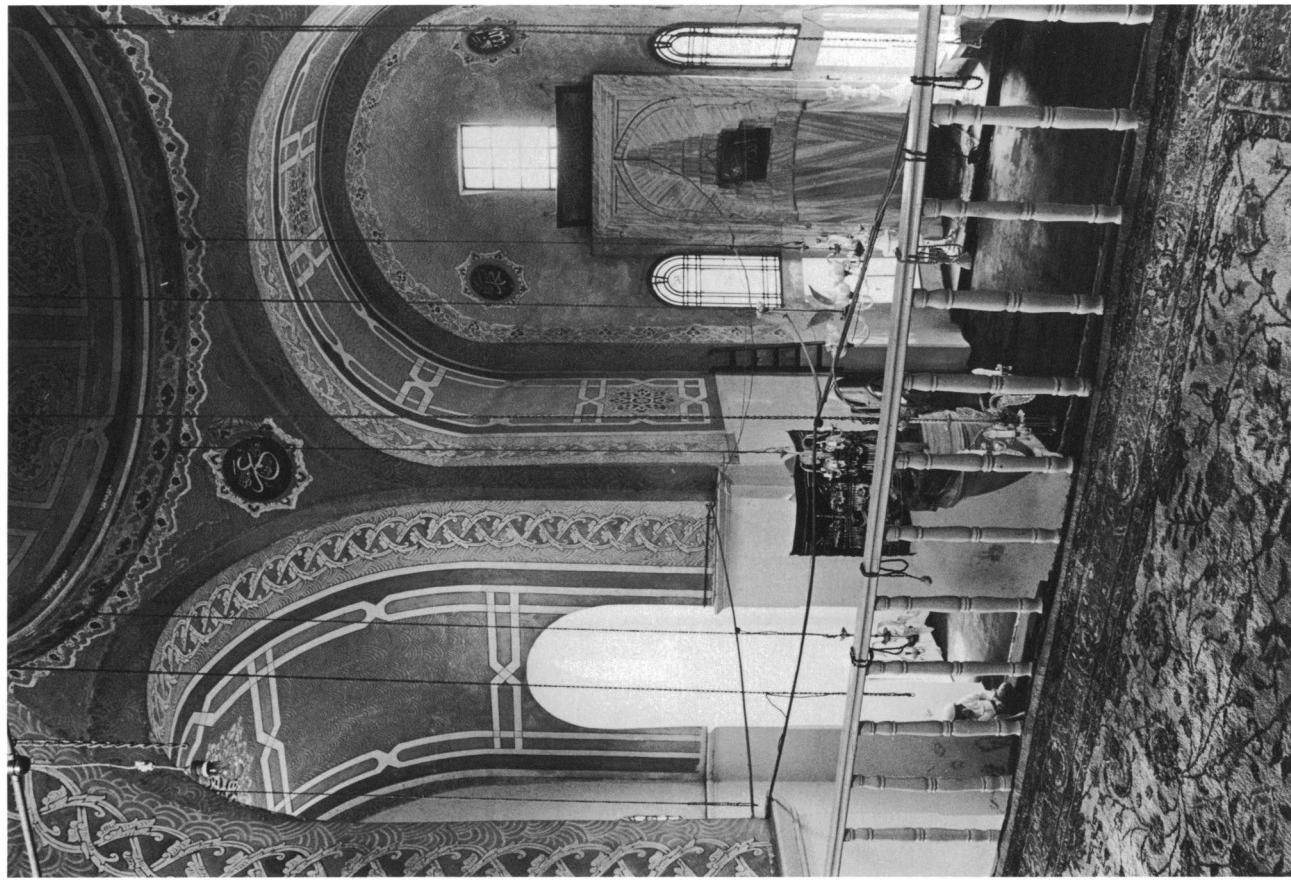
11. North Façade in 1981



12. West Façade in 1969

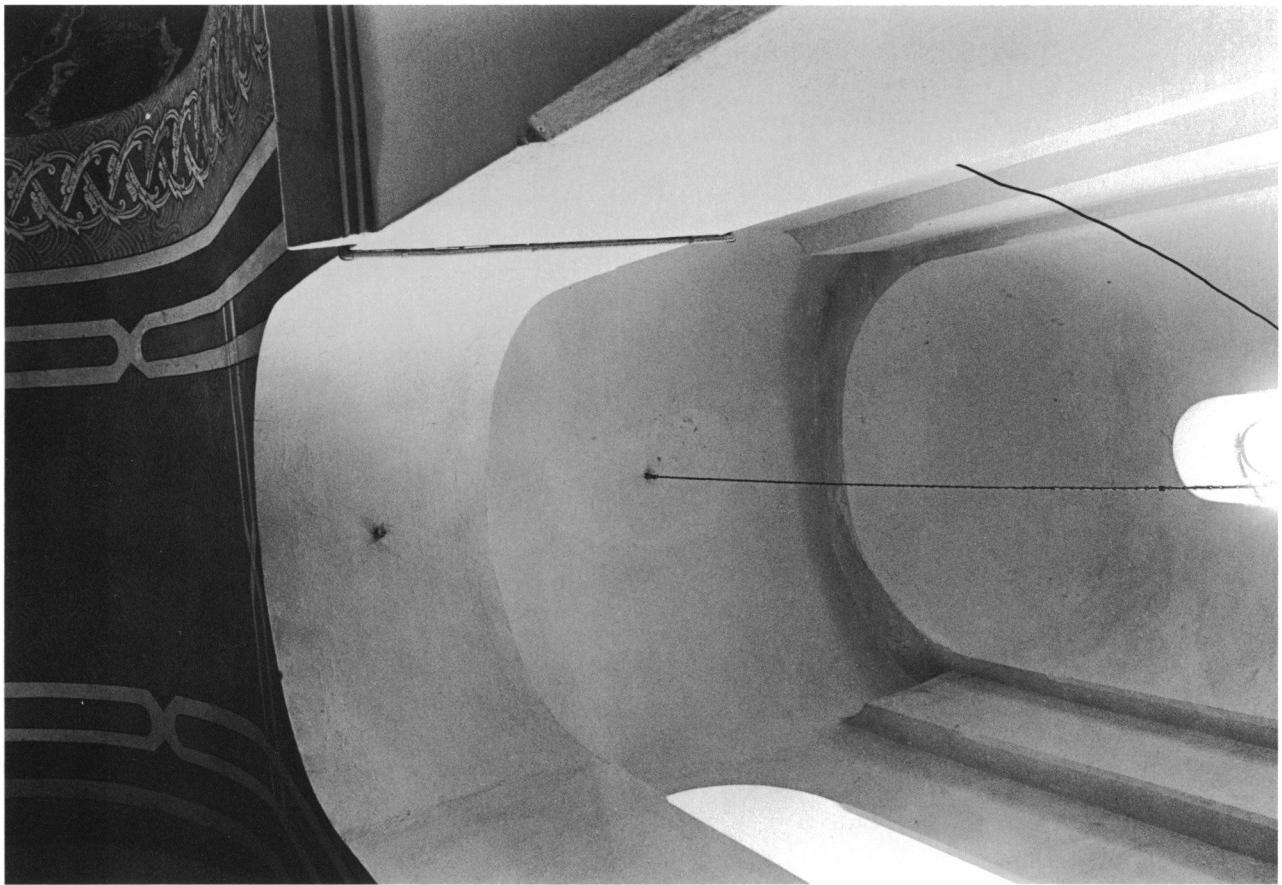


14. Toward Southeast

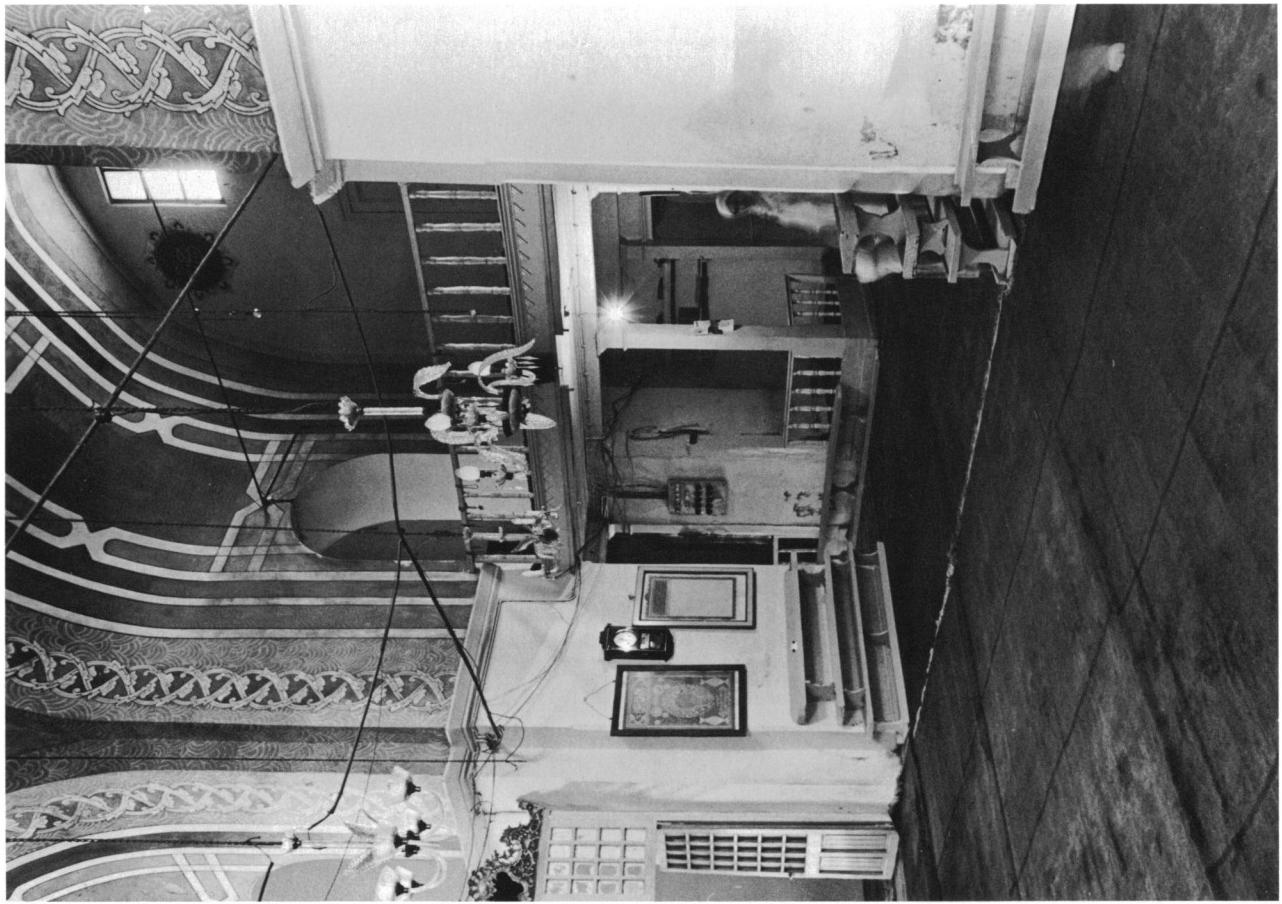


13. Toward Northeast

Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, Interior, in 1981, from Turkish Gallery

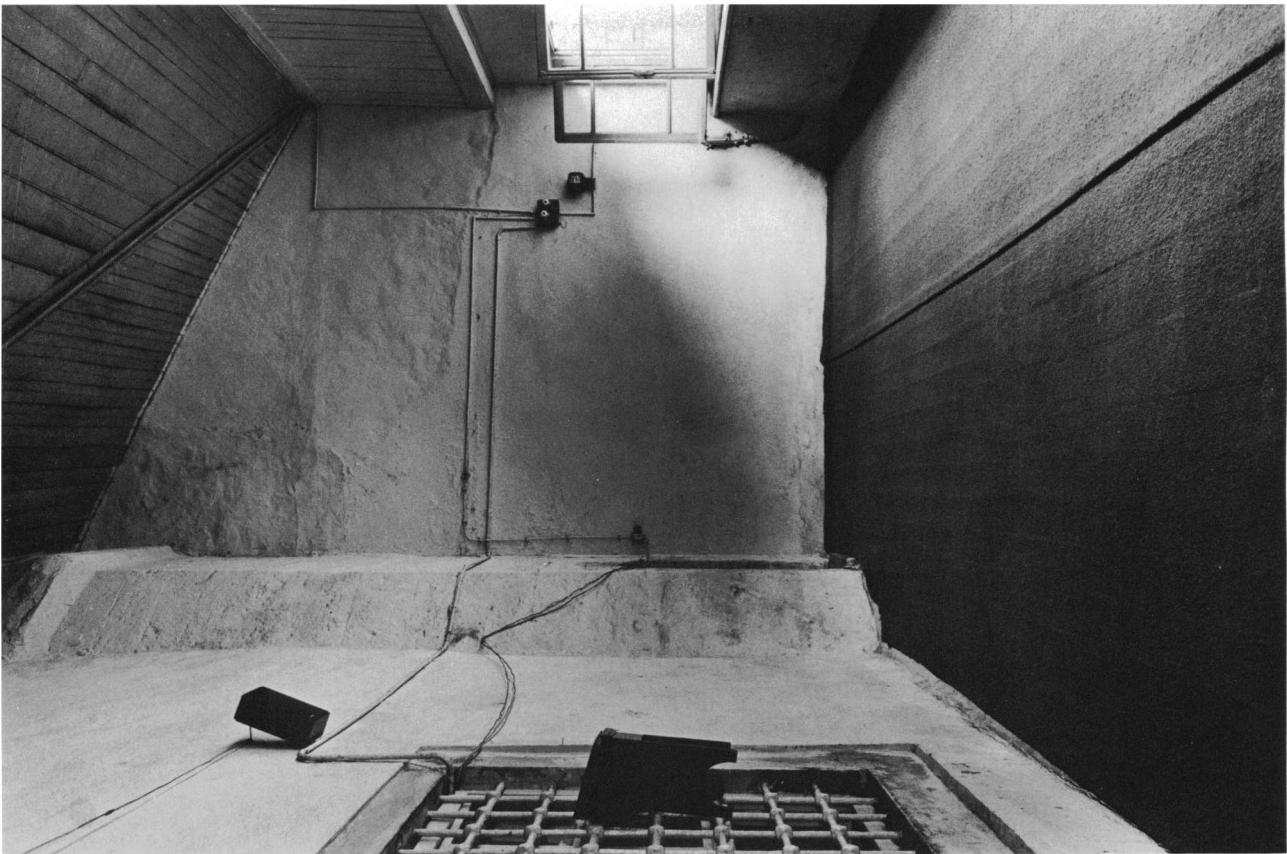


16. Vaulting of Northeast Corner Bay

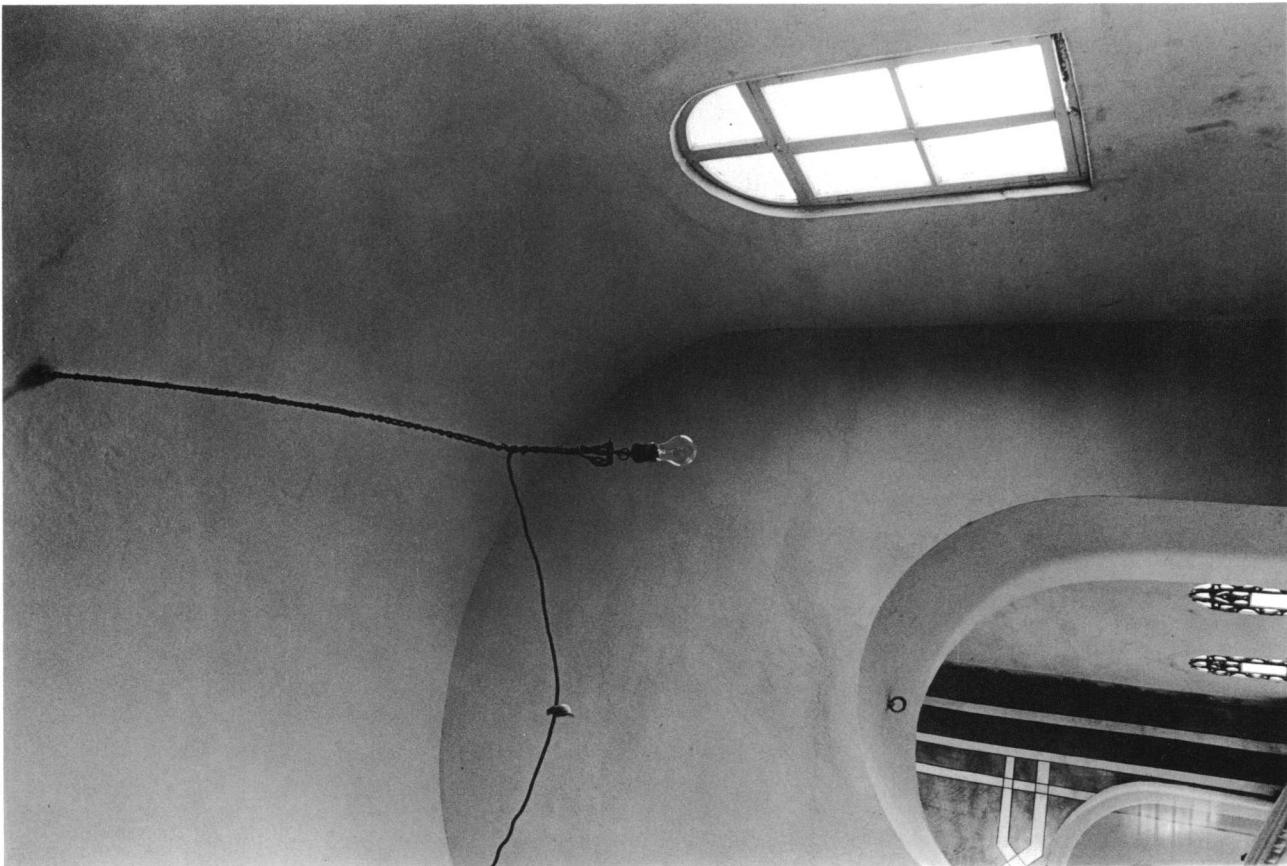


15. Toward Southwest

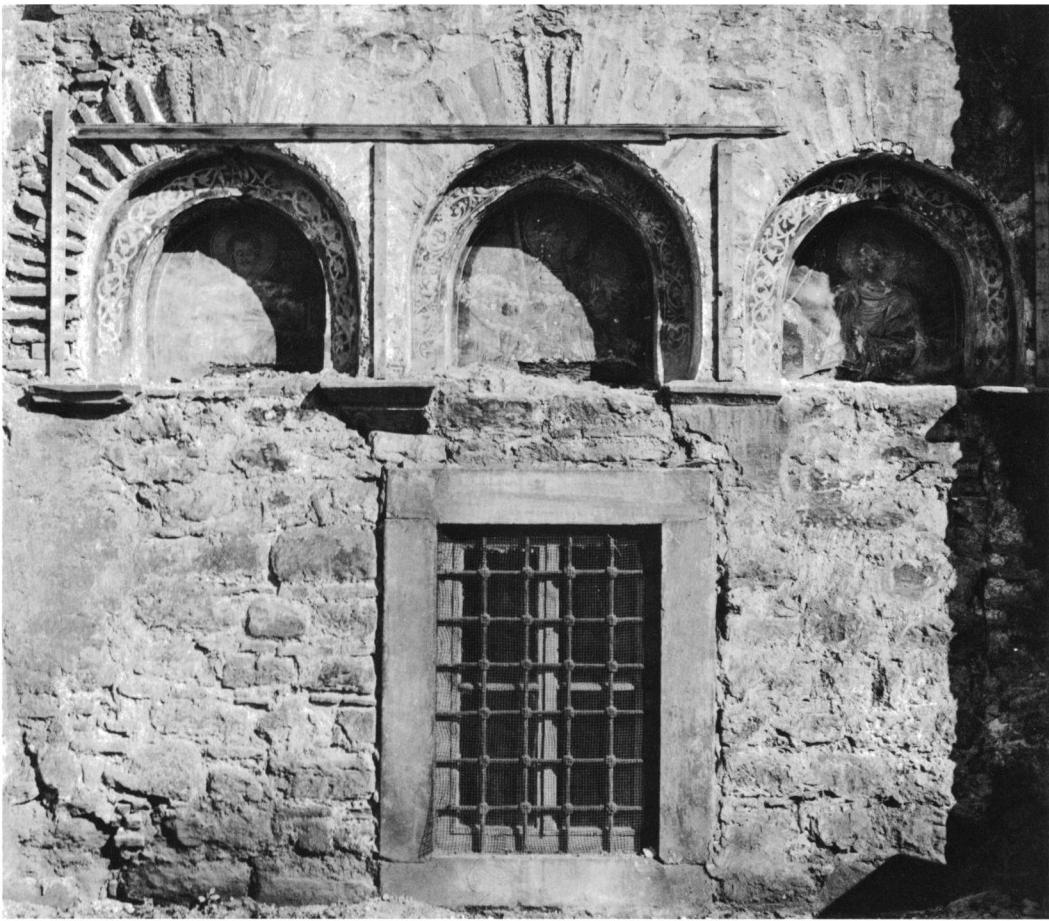
Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, Interior in 1981



18. Porch, toward South



17. Vaulting of Southwest Corner Bay  
Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, Interior in 1981

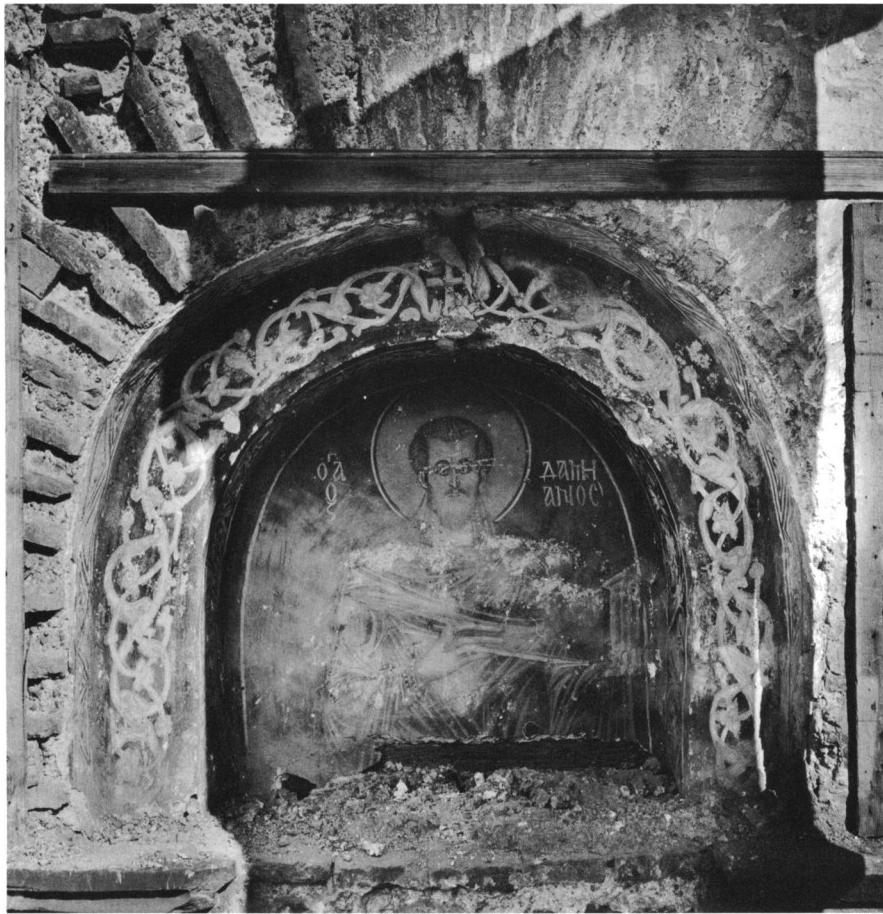


19. Frescoes in Arcade of South Wall



20. The Archangel Michael

Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii



21. St. Damian



22. St. Cosmas

Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii

low. The arch is slightly pointed, which Paspates noticed but Thiers ignored;<sup>24</sup> and a recessed arch appears within it. A pair of imposts above the central rectangular Turkish window indicates the original division of the Byzantine tympanum in three by a pair of mullions. There is no evidence, however, for the slender, quadrant-arched windows that Thiers and Traquair reconstructed either side of the main light. The masonry is now exposed on the left half of the window showing no Byzantine masonry inside the recessed arch. Above the arch of the tympanum there projects another arch which descends to unequal shoulders at the top of the buttresses on either side. This is Turkish; when the roofline was regularized it was necessary to bring the surface of the center bay forward to match the end bays.

The westernmost of the three bays is divided vertically in two on an upper and lower level, but the divisions do not match one another. Here much more is visible now than Thiers could observe. On the ground level, above and left of the Turkish window (which Thiers omitted in his elevation though not in his plans, figs. 1, 9) one can see the impost carrying a pair of arches. The impost is a little broader than those in the arcade of the center bay, but it matches them exactly in height. Since the masonry below the impost is Turkish fill, one may assume that the impost was supported on a column rather than a pier. On the upper level the western bay contains a pair of unusual tall, blind arches with slender windows set lower down in them. The apex of the windows matches that of the window in the eastern bay, their height being determined by the springing of the barrel vaults of the corner bays inside (figs. 8, 17). As is clear from the contrast between Turkish fill and the surrounding Byzantine masonry, the sills of these two windows originally matched the sills of the windows in the middle range of the center bay. It is at this level too that the framing of the two blind arches is abruptly discontinued so that the wall surface of the upper storey projects about 10 cm beyond that of the lower. This projection of the upper storey beyond the lower and the change in the rhythm of the arcading of the two storeys must indicate that something came between the storeys on the exterior, and this must have been a roof of some sort intended to shelter the entrances below. The fact that the division between the storeys is picked up in the fenestration of the middle bay seems to in-

dicate that such a porch continued across that bay as well; the projecting lip just below the middle range of windows may be evidence of the porch roof. In the eastern bay the change in window placement indicates that the porch did not continue that far.

The issue of exterior flanking porches has haunted discussions of Byzantine architecture since Brunov's proposal of a "five-aisled" plan for the Lips church as prototype for a common Russian plan.<sup>25</sup> At the Lips, however, A. Megaw's excavation unearthed evidence only for exterior chapels, or parekklesia, flanking the sanctuary end of the church;<sup>26</sup> some evidence for similar parekklesia has been found along the south side of the Pantokrator and the Vefa Kilise Camii,<sup>27</sup> and the parekklesia at the Chora and Pammakaristos are well known. At the Atik, however, there is no evidence for such parekklesia. Here the side porch seems to have given access not to a chapel but only to the western and center bays, connecting them with the narthex. A parallel for this kind of porch has appeared in the recent excavations of the Kalenderhane Camii where to the north and south of the church there were found foundation walls of an outer porch, not terminating in chapels but simply connecting these bays to the narthex.<sup>28</sup> The purpose of such porches from a liturgical point of view and the reasons for their popularity in Russia have not yet been explained.<sup>29</sup>

The masonry of the north side has been reworked much more thoroughly, and much of the evidence has disappeared (fig. 11). In the eastern and center bays there are traces of the same articulation as observed in the north, which seems to indicate that the north side echoed the south in plan. In the western bay, however, one cannot fol-

<sup>25</sup> N. Brunov, "Ein Denkmal Hofbaukunst von Konstantinopol," *Belvedere*, 51–52 (1926), 217–36; *idem*, "L'église à croix inscrite à cinq nefs dans l'architecture byzantine," *EO*, 26 (1927), 257–86.

<sup>26</sup> A. H. S. Megaw, "The Original Form of the Theotokos Church of Constantine Lips," *DOP*, 18 (1964), 278–98.

<sup>27</sup> A. H. S. Megaw, "Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul," *DOP*, 17 (1963), 335–64; H. Hallensleben, "Zu Annexbauten der Kilise camii in Istanbul," *IstMitt*, 15 (1965), 208–17.

<sup>28</sup> C. L. Striker and Y. D. Kuban, "Work at the Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul," *DOP*, 22 (1968), 185–86; *DOP*, 25 (1971), 251–52.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. the Desyatinnya church in Kiev (989–96), St. Sophia in Kiev (1037 ff), St. Sophia in Novgorod (1042–52), Sts. Boris and Gleb in Chernigov (1097–1123), and the Church of the Intercession on the River Nerl (1165); H. Faensen and V. Ivanov, *Early Russian Architecture* (New York, 1975), 11, 329–33, 360–65, 337, and 346–48 respectively.

<sup>24</sup> See note 12 *supra*.

low a single continuous course of Byzantine masonry.

### 3. *The Interior*

The interior of the mosque is kept in good repair, plastered and painted, which makes it impossible to observe any of the original surfaces. The southeast corner bay is occupied by the shrine of Hazreti Cabir, and is not open to inspection (fig. 14). The area before his shrine, that is, the south arm of the plan, is separated off with a glass screen. The *mimber* stands alongside this screen. A place for women has been provided behind a grill in the northwest corner bay and in the wooden gallery, which runs the width of the building across the west wall and is reached by a wooden stair in the southwest corner bay (fig. 15). The mihrab was placed on axis in the center of the main apse, which fortuitously faced Mecca (fig. 13). The wooden floor is covered with carpets.

The only decorative element that remains from the Byzantine period is a plain cant moulding that encircles the north, west, and south arms but is not continued in the sanctuary or in the corner bays (figs. 13–15). The upper edge of this cornice is 3.60 m from the present floor, at which height it would have corresponded to the roofline of the side porches (fig. 4). A second cornice would normally be expected at the springing of the barrel vaults, and indeed there is some evidence of this. In the east and west arms there is a slight set-back where the curve of the vaults meets the vertical surface of the walls (figs. 13, 14). A set-back at this point is a common Byzantine building practice, but it generally goes unobserved because it is concealed by a cornice; it is the removal of such a cornice that makes it visible here, in spite of efforts to plaster over the difference. Exactly the same has happened at the Eski Imaret Camii where its upper cornice was removed.<sup>30</sup>

The four corner bays open into the crossarms through great arches of 1.52 m average width, and 5.50 m height (measured from the present floor); except for the arches between the main sanctuary and the east corner bays which are lower. The corner bays are simply barrel vaulted (fig. 17), but the vault in the northeast bay may be a replacement of the original (fig. 16). Corner pilasters that frame the apses are terminated abruptly at the springing

of the vault where one would expect them to carry across in an arch.

Of the original articulation of the west wall nothing can be observed either inside or out (figs. 15, 12). The irregularity of the western barrel vault (fig. 15) Ebersolt interpreted as evidence of extensive restoration in this part of the church.<sup>31</sup> One assumes that the church communicated with a narthex through three entrances, but their shape is unknown; windows have replaced the right and left entrances. The porch that has replaced the narthex is chiefly of wood, but its southern wall may possibly incorporate the original wall, marking the line of the south flanking porch (fig. 18).

### 4. *The Frescoes*

On the exterior of the south wall the triple arcade contains frescoes unreported so far (fig. 19). At some unknown date niches were formed by fillings supported upon the original tie-beam which passed through the arcade above the capitals at the springing of the three arches. The niches are stilted lunettes recessed within the inner voussoirs of the original arches; thus space is provided for bands of framing designs — on the face of the inner voussoir and on the two reveals of each arch. A bust of the Archangel Michael occupies the central lunette and busts of the twin brother saints Damian and Cosmas, the Anargyres, the lunettes on his right and left. No trace of fresco survives on the wall face around the niches.

Whatever the original purpose of this area, it seems probable that it was converted at a late period into a parekklesion to house tombs along the interior of the outer wall, which has been totally destroyed, presumably some time since the mid-fifteenth century. It would seem that the fashion for this type of burial in tombs constructed against walls became general by the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries as evinced at Fenari Isa Camii, Fethiye Camii, Kariye Camii, and the undercroft of Bodrum Camii. The small mausoleum of Ahmed Paşa Mescidi, which has burial arcosolia along the walls, dates possibly to the tenth century, and the practice may have originated even earlier.<sup>32</sup> The presence of the Archangel Michael, a

<sup>30</sup> Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches*, figs. 9.12, 9.14, 9.16.

<sup>31</sup> Ebersolt, *Les églises*, 133.  
<sup>32</sup> For the arcosolia of Ahmet Paşa Mescidi, see Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches*, figs. 16.9 and 16.14. H. Buchwald dates the Ahmet Paşa Mescidi to the 9th century, "Sardis Church E-H, Preliminary Report," *JÖB*, 26 (1977), 290 and note 95. Other earlier examples are: the tomb of the founder of Panagia Chal-

psychopomp, conveyor of souls, and the epithet accompanying his name supports the hypothesis that this area was converted for use as a mausoleum. Under present circumstances it is not possible to determine whether the spaces in the lower part of the arcade were walled up to make a separate compartment—a parekklesion—when the conversion was made.

The lunettes are framed by a red border with an inner white line. The backgrounds are black, which may originally have had a thin glaze of white inducing an illusion of blue, an economical technique employed when true blue pigments were an expensive luxury. The haloes are yellow ochre with a white circumference line and an inner line of black. The inscriptions are in white.

The lunette with Michael has survived almost intact apart from a complete loss of the plaster across the face of the tie-beam at the base, except at the left side (fig. 20). There is some superficial damage to the surface, particularly on the left side of the face and hair, resulting in the destruction of the right eye. This was probably caused by the filling of the niche and was not deliberate vandalism.

The inscription δ Ἀρχαγγέλοις Μηχανλ ḡ φῆλαξ (sic) [The Archangel Michael, the guardian] has the first two groups of letters written horizontally on each side of the halo, and the epithet vertically downward between the halo and the left wing.

The florid representation is typical of the manner in which the Archangels were portrayed in the Late Byzantine period. A white band around the head binds the hair. Its ends wave in the halo on either side. The hair is golden brown arranged in small curls across the forehead and on the top and falling down each side of the neck. The face is

keon in Thessaloniki (1028), D. E. Evangelides, 'Η Παναγία τῶν Χαλκέων' (Thessaloniki, 1954), 18–19; the tomb excavated in his Enkleistra cave by St. Neophytes (ca. 1160), C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, "The Hermitage of St. Neophytes and Its Wall Paintings," *DOP*, 20 (1966), 119–206. One can also add the following three examples, for although none is specifically described as a wall tomb, the presence of portraits makes it highly likely that these were of the type that is now familiar to us: portraits of St. Theodore Studite and his brother Joseph adorned the tomb they shared in the Studios monastery (844), according to C. Mango; Caesar Alexios Monsele, son-in-law of the Emperor Theophilus, was buried in his own monastery on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus (840–50) where his tomb and inscribed portrait above the tomb were recorded in the middle of the 10th century in Theophanes Continuatus, Bonn ed., 109; the tomb which the Patrician Melias set up for himself in his own lifetime (mid-11th century), in which he was represented both as layman and as monk, *Die Gedichte der Christophorus Mitylenaias*, ed. E. Kurta (Leipzig, 1903), 9–10, no. 16.

placid. The exposed right forearm is ill drawn, with the back of the hand shown clasping the handle of the sword, which is held almost vertically.

The point of the sword and also the top of the halo break the white outline and red border of the lunette, suggesting projection from the plane surface of the fresco. This device is employed in all three niches.

Michael wears a fanciful cuirass composed of small yellow rectangular plates of scale armor, doubtless intended to represent gold. There is a silver cross on the breast decorated with intertwining foliate forms with a rounded gold motif at the center; these are painted with black and white, and yellow shaded by red to suggest the metals.

The frilled edges of a white undergarment appear at the neck and elbows. A red mantle, decorated with a sprinkling of rosettes composed of white dots, hangs over the shoulders and down the right side. On the other side the mantle is knotted below the shoulder and conveniently conceals the lower part of his left arm. The feathers of the wings are warm umber or red. The bends of the wings point upward with the secondary underfeathers spreading outward on each side, and the primaries point directly down.

The bust of Damian in the lunette to the west has survived with the plaster almost intact (fig. 21). The tie-beam along the base, however, is exposed, except at the left corner. Small areas of superficial damage occur mostly across the shoulders; these were probably caused by the post-Byzantine filling of the niche. The only apparently deliberate mutilation to the painting are a few light scratches across the eyes.

The saint is identified by the inscription: Ὅγιος is compacted into a diamond-shaped group on the left, and Δαμιανὸς is in two horizontal lines on the right. He is clad in a voluminous red mantle piled high behind his neck and draped from the right shoulder over his left arm. A tunic beneath this mantle is exposed only over the right wrist and at the throat where the cuff and collar are yellow decorated with white dots on brown lines.

The head is schematically designed. The features are small and give the face a rather fastidious appearance. The light brown hair is combed forward in strands to make three convex masses so that the hairline recedes in sharp points above the temples. Damian looks directly forward with a benign expression appropriate to the epithet of the physicians, the Anargyres, who gave their services

free. In his right hand is the long, thin shaft of a surgical instrument with an angular, pointed blade. The blade may be identified as a τυφλάγκιστρον (a blunt retractor, literally, "blind hook"), an instrument designed not only to cut but to retract the edges of the incision, and the long wooden handle may be identified as the δορύδιον τυφλάγκιστρον ("small spear").<sup>33</sup> The saint's fingers are disproportionately long and hold this shaft in a somewhat affected manner with the first fingers pointing toward a tall light brown and yellow ochre rectangular container held vertically in the palm of the left hand. The hand as well as the top of this object break the white outline of the background, which is also just overlapped by the top of the halo. The tall container is identified as a πυργισκάριον (a tower-shaped box), a container for instruments or medicines. These boxes were of wood or earthenware and, from their form and color, the latter material seems the more probable for those depicted here.

The bust of St. Cosmas in the niche to the east has all the central features of the face destroyed and both hands damaged (fig. 22). Otherwise, the lunette survived in fairly good condition except for an area of plaster along the base, where the wood tie-beam is exposed, but to a lesser extent than in the other two niches.

The inscription ὁ Ἀγιος Κοσμας is arranged on each side of the halo in a pattern similar to that of Damian. The saint faces directly forward and the movement of the arms is directed toward the central, dominating bust of the Archangel. His hair and beard of light brown are painted as strands combed down to form a convex fringe across the forehead. A rather full rounded beard covers his throat. The symbols of his profession, displayed by Cosmas, are similar to those held by Damian. In his left hand he holds a *pyrgiskarion* vertically in front of his chest, and in his right the shaft of the *typhlangistron* in a fanciful manner, with the thumb, first and third fingers extended, breaking into the border.

Cosmas wears a light blue-grey mantle draped over his chest and shoulders and drawn around his back to hang down the right side of his body where two symmetrical folds form a diamond shape at the hem. Beneath this, an ample, wide-sleeved red garment with a sprinkling of triple spotted motifs in white covers the forearms. The cuffs are richly

embroidered with a rinceaux design in yellow bordered on each side by a row of pearl-like white dots on a darker edging. A collar of similar design appears at each side of the neck. The light blue underside of this garment is visible in a small triangular area below each forearm. The close fitting cuffs of a tunic are seen on the wrists.

The framing designs in the reveals and voussoirs are of two types. All have red borders. One type has a zigzag layout forming triangular areas, which are filled with irregular foliate forms reduced to abstract motifs of two-dimensional red and black patterns on the natural white ground of the lime rendering, reminiscent of twelfth-century decoration. This zigzag type of design is found on both the inner reveal of the central lunette and the outer reveals of each side lunette. The other framing designs are of a foliate rinceaux type on black ground. At the apex of each of the voussoirs is a cross from which the stems of the foliage originate. The sigla for Jesus Christ, IC XC, were inscribed above the crossarms, but that above Damian is lost.

The foliage of the rinceaux around the Archangel is lime white shaded with yellow, no doubt intended to impart a golden tinge. The design is contained by white lines within the red borders. The cross rises upward and from its base the foliage grows down on each side. The curvilinear forms are more richly decorated than those surrounding the saints which do not have white lines along the borders. The foliage around the saints is more angular and less elaborate. The shading is achieved with brush strokes of pale red. Unfortunately, the photographs from which it has been necessary to work afford only a partial and oblique view of the foliate designs on the outer reveal of the central niche and on the inner reveals of the niches on each side. The asymmetrical nature of the designs makes it impossible to produce even schematic drawings of them. What can be seen, however, is sufficient to show that the characteristics are similar and complementary to those on the voussoir of each niche.

It is evident that the designer commenced with the crosses and improvised the growing foliate forms as he proceeded down each side. There was no attempt at symmetry—all follow rhythmic patterns very freely interpreted. The workmanship is precise, the details of the figures and of the designs on the voussoirs are well executed, but, while the heads are carefully painted, the draughtsmanship of the Archangel's right arm is atrocious and his left arm is discreetly concealed from view. This

<sup>33</sup> We are indebted to Dr. Dimitrios Karakantzas and to Charalambos Bakirtzis for the information about the surgical instruments and containers.

is the work of a craftsman-designer rather than of someone who might be thought of as a creative artist-painter.

The frescoes clearly belong to the last period of Byzantine art in Constantinople and should be placed in the first half of the fifteenth century. The letter forms are comparable to those in the inscription of 1438 inside the Silivri gate, that of 1441 near the "Tower of Anemos," and that of 1447–48 of George, despot of Serbia (now in the Archeological Museum at Istanbul).<sup>34</sup> Our stylistic dating can, therefore, be supported by the epigraphy. The frescoes of the Atik must constitute the last well-preserved monumental Byzantine painting to have survived in the city with the exception of the fragments of tomb painting in the outer narthex of the Chora (Kariye Camii),<sup>35</sup> which are, however, in an entirely different style.<sup>36</sup>

##### 5. *The Original Dedication*

The archeological evidence surviving in the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii gives us some basis for reconstructing the original shape of the Byzantine church and for dating it in the ninth century. It remains to ask what the same evidence tells us about the original dedication. Four different identifications have been suggested for the monument. Van Millingen cautiously accepted the identification proposed in the nineteenth century by the Patriarch

<sup>34</sup> B. Meyer-Plath and A. M. Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, pt. 2 (Berlin, 1943), 128, 140. We are indebted to Professor Cyril Mango for this information.

<sup>35</sup> P. A. Underwood, "Paleologan Narrative Style and an Italianate Fresco of the Fifteenth Century in the Kariye Camii," *Studies in the History of Art Dedicated to William E. Suida* (London, 1959), 1–9.

<sup>36</sup> I have undertaken to write about these frescoes, being the only interested person to have had the opportunity to see them twice. On both occasions, however, it was possible to view them only briefly. In the summer of 1956, having been informed, on the eve of what proved to be a destructive civil disturbance, that frescoes had recently been exposed by workmen in the course of maintenance work on the building, I collected timber and worked with my assistant Şaban Kolat throughout the afternoon in a deluge of rain to improvise shuttering to cover that part of the wall containing the paintings. It has remained covered ever since, except for one occasion, the following summer, when the protective covering was opened for just sufficient time to take black-and-white photos for the Byzantine Institute of America; I also took color slides for myself. It is these photos that are published here, and from them and my color slides this description has been compiled. For several years it was hoped that the recording and conserving of the frescoes would be arranged, and that provision would be made to preserve them in situ by means of a simple shelter along the wall, or that they would be removed for presentation elsewhere. Unfortunately, nothing was done, and although the shuttering is still intact the frescoes have been smeared with paint (a fate shared by the mosaics in the narthex of the Vefa Kilise Camii). E.H.

Constantius as the church of Sts. Peter and Mark in the Blachernes.<sup>37</sup> According to the *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, the patricians Galbius and Candidus used this church as a shrine for the tunic of the Blessed Virgin in 458, before the relic was installed in the Theotokos of Blachernes.<sup>38</sup> While the archeological evidence will in no way sustain a fifth-century date, this does not in itself preclude the dedication to Sts. Peter and Mark. Foundation stories often allege an exaggerated antiquity for a church, for the edification of the faithful; it is also quite possible for an early building to be entirely replaced without its dedication changing. The most one can conclude is that when the *Synaxarium* was compiled in the eleventh century there was a church of Sts. Peter and Mark in the Blachernes district that was believed to be a fifth-century foundation. Whether that church was the Atik is unclear.

While accepting this dedication, Van Millingen also proposed a later rededication as St. Anastasia in Blachernes.<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, this is the most nebulous of all possible identifications, for the one possible reference in a chrysobull of 1342, Janin points out, mentions not a church but a gate, either of St. Anastasia or of the Anastasis.<sup>40</sup>

A dedication to St. Thekla, espoused by S. Eyice, contradicts the archeological evidence.<sup>41</sup> Theophanes Continuatus narrates that Thekla, eldest daughter of Emperor Theophilus (829–42), built a new bedchamber within the Blachernes Palace, and within the bedchamber she erected the chapel of her namesaint: καὶ Θέκλα δὲ ἡ τούτου πρώτη θυγάτηρ τὸ κατὰ τὰς Βλαχέρνας κονβούκλειον, ἔνθα καὶ τὸ τῆς πρωτομάρτυρος Θέκλης εὐκτήριον ἴδονται ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος ἥγαγεν εὐμορφότατον· ἐκεῖσε δὲ καὶ τὸν βίον οὐσα κλινοπετῆς ἔξελιτεν. (In addition Thekla, his eldest daughter, erected completely new a bedchamber within the Blachernes [palace], in which is dedicated the oratory of the protomartyr Thekla, of exceeding beauty; here in fact bedridden, she departed this life.)<sup>42</sup> While the ninth-century date of St. Thekla would agree with

<sup>37</sup> Van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches*, 191–92; Constantius, *Ancient and Modern Constantinople*, trans. J. P. Brown (London, 1868), 83. Cf. R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire Byzantin. La siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique. Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), 402.

<sup>38</sup> H. Delehaye, *Synaxarium CP*, entry 2 July, 793–94.

<sup>39</sup> Van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches*, 192.

<sup>40</sup> Janin, *Géographie*, 22.

<sup>41</sup> S. Eyice, *Istanbul. Petit guide à travers les monuments byzantins et turcs* (Istanbul, 1955), 66.

<sup>42</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, III, chap. 44, Bonn ed., 174–78. Cf. Janin, *Géographie*, 141.

our evidence at the Atik, the topography does not. It would not be possible to extend the Blachernes Palace to include the Atik without thereby cutting off the public's access to the very popular church of Theotokos of Blachernes, which was one hundred meters to the west.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the chapel mentioned by Theophanes Continuatus is clearly an appendage to the private chamber of the princess, while the Atik is self-sufficient and out of scale with what one might expect of a bedroom oratory.

Most recently B. Aran has proposed identifying the Atik with a church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian which Russian travelers located somewhere between the Blachernes and the church of St. Theodosia.<sup>44</sup> Aran appeals to the frescoes of Sts. Cosmas and Damian in support of this identification, but again the literary sources do not fit the archaeological evidence. According to its typicon, the monastery had lain in ruins from the time of the Latin Conquest until the Empress Theodora rebuilt it in 1425–48.<sup>45</sup> But no Paleologan construction is evident at the Atik, and Sts. Cosmas and Damian (*and* St. Michael) were of course extremely popular.

Given the elasticity of our map of the districts of medieval Constantinople, still another dedication should be considered, namely, the church of St. Elias in Petrion. As rebuilt by Basil I, its date would fit

<sup>43</sup> Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 302, fig. 344.

<sup>44</sup> Aran, "The Nunnery of the Anargyres," 247–53; B. de Khitrowo (trans.), *Itinéraires russes en Orient* (Geneva, 1889), 233.

<sup>45</sup> H. Delehaye, "Deux typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues," *Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique*, Classe de lettres, ser. 2, 13 (1921), 137, chap. 56, repr. *Synaxaires byzantins, ménologes, typica* (London, 1977), VI, 137, chap. 56.

the Atik nicely. The *Vita Basilii* tells us: τὸν δὲ Ἡλιοὺ τοῦ προφήτου κατὰ τὸ Πετρίον ναὸν ὥσπερ λειποψυχοῦντα ἀνέρρωσε καὶ περιφανῶς ἐκτίσατο, ἐλευθερώσας καὶ τῆς περιστοιχούσης καὶ πιεζούσης τῶν κοινῶν οἰκιῶν συνοχῆς. (As for the church of the prophet Elijah at the Petrion, which was, so to speak expiring, he nursed it back to health and rebuilt it splendidly, having furthermore freed it from the constriction of surrounding houses.)<sup>46</sup> At the close of the twelfth century the church was remarked upon by an English pilgrim: *In loco Antiochi in via Blachernes est ecclesia sancti Helie prophete et est in ipsa de melote eius.* (In the neighborhood of Antiochus, on Blachernes street, there is the church of Saint Elijah the prophet, and in it is part of his mantle.)<sup>47</sup> There are two notable uncertainties in this limited data. In the *Vita Basilii* it is impossible to judge whether Basil's repairs really replaced the earlier church or rather were of a merely cosmetic nature. Secondly, it is not possible to say whether the Petrion district, which lay along the Golden Horn, reached as far north as the Atik; this "Antiochou" neighborhood is distinct from the "Antiochou" neighborhood by the Hippodrome, but it is not otherwise specified in the sources.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, V, 82, Bonn ed., 325; trans. C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 194.

<sup>47</sup> S. G. Mercati, "Santuari e reliquie costantinopolitane secondo il codice Ottoboniano latino 169, prima della conquista latina (1204)," *RendPontAcc*, 12 (1936), 153.

<sup>48</sup> According to the *Synaxarium* there was a church of St. Elisha in the Antiochou neighborhood; *Synaxarium CP*, entry 28 November, 264. On the two Antiochou neighborhoods, cf. R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine. Développement urbain et répertoire topographique*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1964), 310–11.